REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-36 remain pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33 are amended.

In numbered paragraph 5, page 2 of the Office Action, independent claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33, along with all dependent claims, are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,047,330 (Stracke, Jr.) in view of U.S. Patent 5,473,599 (Li et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants have disclosed a method and a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network (e.g., paragraph [0003]). As exemplified in Figure 1, in step 105, first information is obtained from first and second routers of a virtual router. The first information can include the IP address for the virtual router, the group number for the virtual router, the group priority for a router of the virtual router, a group standby state for a router of the virtual router and the actual IP address for the router of the virtual router (e.g., paragraph [0013]). Accordingly, routers can be identified as members of a virtual router, e.g., the group priority being used to identify which router is the active router of the virtual router. A designated router can be on standby for routing functions for the virtual router when the active router switches from the active state, e.g., the active router fails (e.g., paragraph [0002]), in effect allocating a redundant router to a virtual router. A topology identifying the health of the virtual router is produced, for example on a display. When information is obtained regarding a plurality of virtual routers, the display of the topology will identify the health of each of the plurality of virtual routers (e.g., paragraph [00015]).

The foregoing features are broadly encompassed by claim 1, which recites a method for a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network, including, among other features, obtaining first information from a first router and a second router of a virtual router, the first information comprising group priority information and group standby state information; and producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states to display the health of the virtual router at the network management system based on the obtained first information.

The Stracke patent does not relate to a network management system identifying active and standby states of virtual routers in a network. The Stracke patent relates to automatic adaptation of operating routers to changes in the network topology. The Stracke patent discloses how operating routers manage to adapt to changes in the network topology (col. 4, lines 35-40). The Stracke patent is directed to balancing the network topology among operational routers (col. 2, lines 8-11). However, the disclosed system of Stracke's patent is based on router-to-router adaptation without 1) an intervening network management system producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states to display the health of the virtual router at the network management system 2) based on first information obtained from a first router and a second router of a virtual router, the first information comprising group priority information and group standby state information. The Stracke patent does not teach or suggest a method for a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network, including, among other features, obtaining first information from a first router and a second router of a virtual router, the first information

comprising group priority information and group standby state information; and producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states to display the health of the virtual router at the network management system based on the obtained first information, as claimed.

The Li et al. patent does not cure the deficiencies of the Stracke, Jr. patent. The Li et al. patent discloses a new router determining the priority of an active router is lower than its own (col. 3, lines 5-7). The Li et al. patent further discloses that the new router can elect and install a replacement standby and/or replacement active router (col. 3, lines 7-10). Election is performed automatically between routers (col. 3, lines 12-14). However, no information is obtained by a separate network management system to display the health of the virtual router at the network management system. The Li et al. patent does not teach or suggest a method for a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network, including, among other features, obtaining first information from a first router and a second router of a virtual router, the first information comprising group priority information and group standby state information; and producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states to display the health of the virtual router at the network management system based on the obtained first information, as claimed.

At least for these reasons, independent claim 1 is allowable. Applicants' independent claims 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33 similarly recite the aforementioned claim features, and are also allowable. The remaining claims depend from the independent claims and recite additional advantageous features which further

distinguish over the document relied upon by the Examiner. As such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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